

Message Text

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ACTION CEQ-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CU-04 NSF-04 AID-20 CIAE-00

COA-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 EPA-04 INR-10 IO-15 L-03

NSC-10 NSAE-00 PM-07 RSC-01 SCI-06 SS-15 SPC-03 DRC-01

SSO-00 /144 W

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P 051405Z OCT 73

FM AMCONSUL SEVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1228

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

UNCLAS SEVILLE 0273

FOR EPA ADMINISTRATOR RUSSELL E. TRAIN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, TBIO, SP

SUBJ: ECOLOGICAL DISASTER AT COTO DE NONA ANA

REF: STATE'S 195924

1. CONSULATE HAS MADE CONTACT WITH DR. JOSE ANTONIO VALVERDE GOMEZ AND WITH SR. FERNANDO GONZALEZ-BERNALDEZ CONCERNING THE RECENT ECOLOGICAL DISASTER AT COTO DE DONA ANA. ADDITIONAL CONVERSATIONS HAVE BEEN HELD WITH BIOLOGISTS WORKING DIRECTLY WITH PROBLEM. EPA ADMINISTRATOR RUSSELL E. TRAIN'S EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY HAVE BEEN PASSED ALONG AND WERE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.

2. PROBLEM AT COTO APPEARS TO BE COMPLICATED AND BIOLOGISTS WORKING ON CASE STILL DO NOT HAVE A DEFINITIVE ANSWER AS TO CAUSE OF DISASTER. BEST ESTIMATE AT PRESENT IS THAT EARLY PESTICIDE POISONING OF SOME ANIMALS WHICH THEN DIED LEAD TO CASES OF BOTCHALISM, WITH BOTCHALISM NOW BEING MAIN CAUSE OF DEATH, SPECIES MOST HEAVILY AFFECTED SO FAR HAS BEEN SPOON-BILLED DUCK. ESTIMATES ARE THAT OVER 80 PER CENT OF SPOON-UNCLASSIFIED

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BILL POPULATION HAS BEEN LOST.

3. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH RESPONSIBLE SPANISH SCIENTISTS THEY EMPHASIZED THAT GREATEST ASSISTANCE WHICH COULD BE GIVEN TO THEM AT THIS TIME WOULD BE APPROACHES TO SPANISH GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD MAKE IT AWARE OF NEED TO GIVE ADEQUATE PROTECTION TO COTO AND TO GIVE IT SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO PROTECT GREAT WILD LIFE PRESERVE. ALL HAVE SAID THAT ANY ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN CAN GIVE IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. CUTTER

NOTE BY OC/T: BOTCHALISM IN TEXT APPEARS TO BE PHONETIC TRANSLATION OF BOTULISM.

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